

PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING
July 11, 2017

Members Present: Scottie Ard, Ron Volkert, and Jim Jackson

Others Present: Craig Yehlik, Mike Darrow, Jim VanderWyst, Matt Melby, Lori Brinkman, Wanda Viellieux, Deb Iverson.

Scottie Ard called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Roll call was taken.

Jim Jackson moved to adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Scottie Ard and carried.

Jim Jackson moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting of March 8, 2017, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Traffic Control Demonstration

Fire Chief Jim Vanderwyst discussed the Fire Department's traffic control procedures at accident scenes. This is the order of setup at accident scenes:

- 1) Scene security
- 2) Incident command
- 3) Rescue
- 4) Fire Protection
- 5) Environment Protection
- 6) Traffic Protection
- 7) Deploy traffic warning signs

Chief Vanderwyst outlined the setup of traffic control:

- 1) Sign
- 2) Tanker
- 3) Cones
- 4) Warning Lights
- 5) Traffic Controller

Chief Vanderwyst also discussed the various lights, flashers, protective vests, and signs used as traffic control measures. He also showed photos of the rear view of a fire truck and the different warning signals they flash. Chief Vanderwyst compared NRFD's practices with the guidelines of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce and found that NRFD is doing a great job with traffic control at accident scenes.

Traffic Conditions

Public comment from Wanda Viellieux, 611 West Fourth Street. Wanda stated her concerns about safely crossing in crosswalks. She pointed out two major areas of concern. The first is at the intersection of South Knowles Avenue and Fourth Street (Family Fresh/Post Office). Wanda stated drivers do not always look for pedestrians before going through the intersection. Her second major area of concern is the intersection at West Fourth Street and South Dakota Avenue. She noted some improvement since the City installed crosswalk signs, however, many drivers are still not stopping.

Public comment from Deb Iverson, 965 Paperjack Drive. Deb lives across from Faith Community Church and is concerned about how fast vehicles travel along that section of Paperjack Drive. She's concerned about the safety of walkers trying to cross in the marked crosswalk area. Deb mentioned

that even with the radar and flashing lights in place in that area, cars are still going too fast to be able to stop in time for people to safely cross the street. Another area Deb noticed speeding traffic is on West Fourth Street near the BP gas station. There is a crosswalk there as well. She stated that many drivers are travelling too fast and do not notice pedestrians waiting to cross in the designated crosswalk.

Scottie thanked Wanda and Deb for bringing these traffic and pedestrian safety issues to the Committee. Police Chief Craig Yehlik stated that traffic speeds are a problem in all communities. He asked for the residents' help in watching for busy times during the day so he can try to assign officers to the area to help control speeds.

Traffic Tamers

Scottie Ard mentioned that the City of Hudson, along with other municipalities, has instituted a Traffic Tamers program in which volunteers are trained to spot traffic violations and report them to the police department. The volunteers are trained to identify the vehicle and license plate number and turn this information over to the police department along with the date and time of the violation. Scottie wonders if this is something New Richmond could implement.

Chief Yehlik stated that Officer Crubaugh has been researching this program for several months. Another community that uses Traffic Tamers is Menomonie. This program also takes time and effort of the Police Department staff (looking up owners of vehicles, typing and mailing letters, etc.). Chief Yehlik would like to continue to research this to see if it's a viable option for New Richmond. He will check with City Attorney Nick Vivian regarding liability issues.

Wisconsin VFW State Parade

The next Wisconsin VFW State Loyalty Parade will be held in April of 2018. Scottie stated that we can expect a much larger group for the next parade than we had this year. A meeting will be held in the next few weeks to begin the planning process for next year's parade.

Parade Permits

Scottie spoke about the current process and timeline for submitting applications to the City for parades. Applications are filled out, turned in to the Clerk's office, and then forwarded to the Police Department who then apply for the State parade permit. The State requires 90 days to approve the permit. Scottie stated that sometimes the 90-day mark is cut too closely. Scottie brought up the idea of setting a date each year (i.e. January 1) by which all parade permit applications need to be submitted. There was much discussion. Scottie would like to bring this item to the City Council's attention and work together to come up with a parade permit deadline. She will bring this to the August work session.

Firearm Sales

Chief Yehlik said he recently received some new information about the firearm topic and would like to review that information and then bring this topic to the next meeting.

Police Department Mission Statement

Chief Yehlik stated that as a new police administration moves forward, he believes now is a good time to adopt a new mission statement. Chief Yehlik created a new mission statement he feels is direct and reflects the core values of the police department; he also believes it goes hand-in-hand with the City's values. The Committee reviewed the proposed mission statement and requested a few minor wording changes. Chief Yehlik would like the mission statement to be posted at the Police Department and at the Civic Center.

Scottie made a motion to accept the proposed mission statement with the changes outlined. Seconded by Jim Jackson and carried. Chief Yehlik will make the changes and bring the mission statement to the next Council meeting.

Retirees Credentials and HR218 Information

In the past, police department retirees have been issued a retiree identification card but have not been offered any qualification shoots through the NRPD. If qualification shoots are held, retired NRPD officers could carry a concealed weapon under the HR218 law without obtaining conceal-and-carry permits. Chief Yehlik wonders if the Public Safety Committee would like to explore having the NRPD hold qualification shoots. Chief Yehlik has had two retired officers recently inquire about HR218. There was much discussion about this topic. City Administrator Mike Darrow stated the retired officers would need to sign an indemnification clause. Chief Yehlik will check with City Attorney Nick Vivian on liability issues. If the PSC, City, and PD move forward with holding qualification shoots for retirees in order to qualify for the HR218, Chief Yehlik would like to have some set guidelines in place such as: the retired officer must have been with the NRPD for at least ten years, was in good-standing when they left, and would be responsible for paying all of their own expenses relating to the firearm shoots (range time, training, firearm, ammunition, etc.). Chief Yehlik will gather information from surrounding communities who have done this and will invite them to come to the August Council meeting where this will be discussed further.

Defense and Arrest Tactics (DAAT) – Baton Use

Chief Yehlik explained that the law enforcement standard for the past 20+ years has been to utilize a 26-inch expandable baton for on-duty carry. This impact weapon is approved in the Wisconsin Defense and Arrest Tactics model and all officers have been trained in its use during basic recruit schooling. The New Richmond Police Department historically carried the 26-inch Asp brand expandable baton on their duty belt while on duty. However, in recent years, the former Chief of Police implemented the use of a 26-inch wood baton as the primary impact weapon for NRPD officers. Chief Yehlik explained that while the 26-inch wood baton is a good visual deterrent, it is cumbersome on the duty belt and is restricting while running. It cannot be attached to the duty belt at all times (i.e. while driving). The Asp expandable baton can be attached to the duty belt at all times. Chief Yehlik would like to make the 26-inch Asp expandable baton the primary impact weapon authorized for carry by the NRPD. He would also like to continue to have the 26-inch wood baton as an authorized secondary impact weapon. If the Committee approves this policy change, Chief Yehlik will update the policy and bring it to the August City Council meeting.

Jim Jackson moved to authorize the change in policy to allow the 26-inch expandable Asp baton as the New Richmond Police Department's primary impact weapon, seconded by Scottie Ard and carried.

K-9 Fundraising Update

Chief Yehlik gave an update on the fundraising efforts for a K-9 unit. So far, \$39,700 has been received. There are also some pledged funds that have not yet been received. We are currently \$10,300 short of the \$50,000 goal. Chief Yehlik also showed off the kilt he may be wearing at the Fun Fest parade.

Communications and Miscellaneous

Chief Yehlik thanked the Council members in attendance for their support of the letters of commendation given at Monday night's City Council meeting.

Scottie Ard moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ron Volkert and carried.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.

Minutes by Lori Brinkman